A TRVE DISCOVRSE OF

A cruell fact committed by a Gentlewoman towardes her Husband, her Father, her Sister and two of her Nephewes.

First printed in French at Roan: and now translated into English.

LONDON

Imprinted by Iohn Wolfe, and are to bee sold at his shoppe within Popes head Alley in *Lombard street.* 1599.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A true discourse of a cruell fact committed by a Gentlewoman towards her husband, her father, her sister, and two of her nephewes.

AT *Lucera*, a Citie distant foure iourneyes from *Naples*, there was a good gentleman, named *Signior Alexander de Buringel*, who had two daughters, to wit, *Anna*, and *Lucienna*, the which he maried highly, according to their qualities. The worthy Gentleman Signeor *Appian de Boyse* Chauncellor of *Naples*, a man most expert, wise & vertuous, espoused *Anna* the elder: and *Alphonse de Barseils* espoused *Lucienna*. The solemnities done, and the feastes and pastimes finished, it was not long but Signior *Appian* went to *Naples*, & taking his leaue of his wife, went to *Barseils* to see his brother and sister in law, where hauing soiourned some daies, he departed with all diligence to finish his voyage. Thus *Anna* remained alone very long, whereat she beganne greatly to grieue, and began to thinke and cast, which way to procure a seruaunt to supply her husbandes place: Finding her selfe greatly solicited by one *Maurice Talleys*, a young man, faire, and bold, but of a

baſe condition and bad life, ſhe her ſelfe burning dayly with his loue, gaue the rains to all voluptuouſneſſe, breaking her faith and coniugall loue. Her husband hauing occaſion to ſtay at *Naples*, ſent for her diuers times, which ſhe refuſing, he in anger ſent her word, not to faile to come, withall vſing ſome threates: She againe excuſing her ſelfe, ſent him word that ſhe was ſicke, and that ſhe feared to come leaſt the aire of *Naples* ſhould kill her. Some daies after being in conference with her fauourite *Talleis*, ſhe ſhewed him her husbandes letters, whereupon finally they conſpired *Appians* death. The concluſion was, that *Anna* ſhould go to viſite her ſiſter *Lucienna*, three iourneyes from *Lucera*, at the Caſtel of *Barſeils*, whither *Talleys* alſo appointed to come and there to ende their complottes. *Anna* hearing that her brother in law was to muſter his quarter, tooke horſe & departed to viſite her ſiſter: Being hard by the Caſtel, ſhe ſent her Lackey to giue her knowledge of her comming, wherat the good gẽtlewoman being very glad, went to meet her with her two little ſons, hauing firſt giuen order in her houſe for the entertainment of her ſiſter. After the welcomes and embracementes, they returned to the Caſtell, where they founde the table couered and the cates readie, expecting their comming, the welcomes being repeated, they waſhed and ſet themſelues at table, where they were ſerued with ſuch cheere as any one may iudge that a ſiſters hart could afforde. After dinner the two gentlewomen began to talke of the gouernment of their houſes and husbands, where *Lucienna* greatly commended her husbande, aſſuring her

ſiſter,

ſiſter, that if he had beene preſent ſhe ſhould haue had better cheere, beſeeching her to holde her excuſed. *Anna* ſighing, thanked her ſaying, my cheere paſſeth my deſert; but truely ſiſter, God hath done you more fauour then me, being ſo well matched with a kinde husband, and meruaile not of the great loue, which my father hath alwaies borne you in reſpect of mee, in hauing matched you ſo wel to your content. It is your pleaſure to ſay ſo (quoth *Lucienna*) but without compariſon you are more richly & highly matched then I am. A figge for riches (replied *Anna*) ſo I had but a husband as you haue, to my contentment, and of whom I might reape ſome delight, for in truth I am as badly furniſhed with a husband as any Gentlewoman in this country, and thinke you not that I ſpeake this in any enuy towardes you, or any wayes to your preiudice: but I blame our Father for it, in hauing ſo badly matched me. T'is ſtraunge (quoth *Lucienna*) for my brother your husbande hath at diuers times beene heere, of curteſie to viſite vs, and hath remayned here ſome daies (though not ſo long as wee deſired) in which time wee haue found him ſo honourable and graue in all his deedes, that in mine opinion we ſhould greatly wrong him to blame him: alſo hee hath at diuers times told and proteſted vnto mee the loue which he beareth you, ſhewing me the letters by which you refuſed to come to *Naples*, becauſe that you were ſicke, with many other circumſtances: he ſaid moreouer, that he deſired with all his heart to returne to his houſe for a time, but that vrgent affaires hindred him, that it was impoſſible (in reſpect of his

office) to doe it. O God (quoth *Anna*) I thinke my mischiefes increase dayly from worse to worse: for she of whom I expected comfort and succour, is my halfe enemie, in giuing more faith vnto the fained wordes of my husband then to mine. If you did but know him as wel as I, you would not defend his cause so much. O you know not his trickes which he vseth at *Naples*, not contented with one trull, but keepeth and maintaineth three, yea foure: therefore it is no meruaile though wee haue no lineage, which truely greatly grieueth me, and it would grieue me as much to declare you one thing which lieth vppon my stomacke, although you are my sister. The young gentlewomã believing her words said, sweet sister be not displeased, nor thinke not strange of the things which I tell you, for in deed men are harde to bee knowne: but in these afflictions we ought to pray to God, and with our vertues seeke to draw our husbands heartes to vs, and certainely God will chaunge their mindes: I speake not this for my selfe, for (as I haue told you) I haue no cause to complaine. Here she stopt, by reason of the ariuall of some Gentlewomen neighbours to *Lucienna*, and so their parley was broke off, and after salutations, passed the time vntil supper in talke: mean while *Maurice Talleis* with two other Gentlemen was come, the which for her sake were very welcome and greatly feasted. After supper *Talleis* tooke his loue *Anna* vnder the arme, walking into the garden, and began to talke how they should performe their damnable and wicked enterprise. Sweet loue (quoth *Anna*) you know I haue against my will beene maried to

this

this olde doting foole, which maketh no account of me, who I feare by his subtiltie will espie our familiaritie, which if he doe, it will cost vs both our liues, and therefore the surest way is to make him out of the way, after the subtilleſt sort possible, to the ende that we may liue in delight without thought or feare, and finish our loue in pleasure and content, vpon condition that you shall marrie mee, and for recompence I will make you the richest man in this land. I sweare and protest vnto you (quoth that miserable wretch) not to disobey you in any point, but to accomplish your will to the vttermost. Well then (quoth she) you shall go to *Naples*, and I will giue you my Lackey with letters to my husband, and as soone as you shall haue knowne my husband, insinuate your selfe into his acquaintance, by which means you may more easily giue an ende to his wretched and miserable daies by some secret death, which I thinke poison would do best, & with lesse perill. This counsel was by *Talleis* found good, the houre of rest being come, they parted: the gentlemen to one chamber, & the gentlewomen to another, where *Anna* forgot not to dispatch her husband. The two sisters lay together, but *Anna* tooke small rest, by the thought of her wicked enterprise. The morning the Gentlemen tooke leaue of the Gentlewomen & *Anna* gaue her letters to the Lackey, & the poison to *Talleis* as they had agreed. Being come to *Naples*, and marked whither the Lackey went, and so knew Signior *Appian*, hee saluted him, in profering him all humble seruice, wherof he thanked him. This he continued for a great while, often saluting him, and

accompanying him euery where, where hee went. One day he made a banket, to the which amongst other Gentlemen he inuited Signeor *Appian*: and in the middest of the Supper, and their meriment, hee seeing time made signe to a fellow (whom he had hired for the nonce, giuing him fiftie Crownes) who gaue him the deadly potion. Which done, he watched a time so well that hee murthered him who had done the fact, thereby to make the matter sure: and the next day tooke horse and posted to *Lucera*, to giue the newes thereof to *Anna*. The good Gentleman Signeor *Appian* finding himselfe ill at ease, resolued to go to his house at *Lucera*, whither he could not attain, but died within two leagues of the same. *Anna* being at *Barseils* was aduertised by the Lackey that her husband was gone to *Lucera*, whereof she made great signes of ioy, and taking leaue of her sister, departed for *Lucera*, where she found her husband deceased, whereat she seemed greatly discomforted. In fine, she caused the funeralles with great pompe to bee solemnized, at the which were diuers Gentlemen, and especially her father, the which all comforted her, the obsequies ended, euery one departed home, & *Talleis* came to visit his mistris, to whō he told how he had effected the murther: wherat she was maruellously wel pleased, saying that thence forward they might without feare liue together contentedly, counselling him to demand her of her father in mariage, but that whether he would or no, she was resolued neuer to haue other but him. Whereupon *Talleis* did as she willed him, but her father gaue him no aunswere, whereof

she

ſhe being aduertiſed (poſſeſſed of the Deuill) was greatly enraged, and imagined how ſhe might be reuenged in making him die: and preſently without other deliberation thereon, reſolued to poiſon him, together with her ſiſter, & her two nephewes, the better to take her pleaſure without contradiction, and to enioy the goods. Meane while her brother in law *Alfonce de Barceils* fell ſicke in his houſe, to whom their father trauelled to viſite him, cauſing him to bee well tended, but notwithſtanding hee died, to the great griefe of *Lucienna*, and her father: his funerals being ended, her father returned againe to his houſe, leauing *Lucienna* with her children alone.

Shortly after, a deſire tooke him to make a voyage into *Fraunce*, wherefore he feaſted all his friendes, amongſt the which his two daughters were not forgotten: *Anna* likewiſe forgot not her diuiliſh intent. The banket was braue and honourable. The father being moued with mirth, called for a cup of wine to drinke to all his friendes: *Anna* faining the good huſwife ſtept to the pot her ſelfe, and filled a cup of wine, where hauing put the poiſon, with a pleaſant countenance preſented it to her father, who not doubting any thing, drunke a great draught vnto all the aſſiſtants, whereof in few dayes he died, to the great content of *Anna* & her adulterer. *Lucienna* was ſent for to the funerals of her father, who came accordingly with her two children, and was by *Anna* greatly welcommed, and requeſted to lodge in her houſe, which ſhe did, ſtaying there ſome daies to her miſhap, for her ſiſter ſeeing a fit time, gaue her alſo a drinke of the ſame na-

ture: whereupon the gentlewoman finding her ſelfe verie ſicke, departed to her houſe, leauing her two children in the keeping of her ſiſter: and being come home ſhe was not long there but dyed. Whereof *Anna* being aduertiſed, making ſemblance of greate griefe tooke horſe to ride to *Barſeils*, to ordaine the funerals, but before her departure ſet order to her houſe, which together with her two nephewes ſhe left in the keeping of an Aunt of hers, giuing her charge of the children aboue all things: but the wicked wretch had already giuen them alſo of the drinke which ſhe had giuẽ to the mother, the which becauſe but yong & tender, they could not ſo long reſiſt the violence of the poiſon, but died ſhortly after the departure of their wicked Aunt, who comming to *Barſeils*, with a fained ſorrow, hauing interred her ſiſter, tooke poſſeſſion of the goodes, in the name of the children, ſaying that ſhe was to looke to their right, the which alſo ſhe did by her fathers goodes: all which being done, ſhe returned to *Lucera*, where finding the two infants dead and buried, made ſuch pitifull ſignes of griefe, and wofull lamentations, that her treaſon was neuer perceiued nor doubted. Hauing brought all things thus to her wiſh ſhortly after was maried to *Maurice Talleis*, where the feaſts & pomps were great, & honored with a great number of nobility. The mariage rites being ended, *Talleis* perceiuing that he had attained his deſire, began to riot, to haunt plaies and bankets, whereat *Anna* began to enter into ielouſie, and at length into ſuch a hate of him, that ſhe diſpraiſed and blamed him in euery place where ſhe came: for Gods iuſt prouidence

uidence is such, that it neuer suffereth any such wicked actes to continue hidden and vnpunished, to the end that euery one may take example by them, especially to children to keep them alwaies in the feare and loue of God, and obedience of their parents and friends.

The Deuill desiring to see the ouerthrow of this wicked *Anna*, sowed such discord betweene her husband & her, that they did nothing but wish one anothers ruine. *Signior Antonio de Boyse*, nephew to the deceased *Appian* tooke a wife, & at his mariage amongst his kinsfolkes and friendes, *Talleis* and his wife were inuited, when being at the table, the company verie merrie, *Talleis* looked angerly vpon his wife, and giuing her some name, tolde to some of his familiar acquaintance which were by him, what dishonour she did him euery where: she to the contrary reproched him, that she had raised him vp from a begger to a Gentleman, & that it was well knowne what she was, and what hee was. *Talleis* finding himselfe touched, spurned at her with his foote vnder the table, insomuch that she feeling the smart called him murtherer and poisoner, and that hee had poisoned her late husband: whereat *Talleis* drawing his dagger stroke at her, but being by some of the company hindred, the dagger flying out of his hands stucke in the side of a yong Gentleman of good calling, of which blow he died, Signior *Anthonio Boise*, hauing heard their debate, and seeing the murther committed in his house, presently sent for the Iustice, which attached *Talleis* & his wife, and vppon examination *Talleis* confessed all and euerie circumstance of the murthers, whereupon she

being examined apart, vtterly denied all, and to be ignorant of any such matter, which greatly troubled the Iustices: yet by good meanes and faire wordes they fetched her out, that she confessed that she was consenting to her husbands death, wherupon they shewing her that she deserued punishment, and putting her in mind of Gods great mercy & of his horrible iudgement against the wicked: she finding her conscience to witnesse against her, confessed also to haue poisoned her father, her sister, & her two nephewes: all at the persuasion of the Deuill, for concupiscence of her desires, the carnall voluptuousnesse, wicked ambition and couetousnesse: imploring Gods mercy, and the fauour of the Iustice.

The ſentence and iudgement againſt

Maurice Talleis, and Anne his wife, for the murthers and empoiſonmentes by them committed.

THe iuſtice hauing conſidered all, & finding the verification of their fact by the agreeing of their confeſſions, they were cõdemned to make honorable amends, naked in their ſhirtes with cordes about their neckes, and each of them a torch in their hande, before the great church, aske pardon & mercy of God and the Iuſtice. After they were by the executioner of the high Iuſtice brought into the publique place, where they had their tongues pulled out, and their handes cut off, which done, they were beheaded, and their heades ſet in the moſt eminent place to behelde and to ſerue for a memorie for euer: their bodies burned and conſumed to aſhes. Where before the finiſhing of their daies, the poore Gentlewoman ſhewing ſigne of great repentance, lifting often her eyes vp to heauen, beſeeched the aſſiſtants well to educate and inſtruct their children in the feare of God, laudable vertues and good manners, and turning her voice to the children, exhorted them to take

example at her: that they ſhoulde alwaies haue the feare of God before their eyes, to render obedience to their parents and friendes: and often to rememorate that pitifull ſpectacle. Making their prayers to God to pardon their faultes, and to keepe them from falling into ſuch extremities, and wicked accidents.

Ika mort tu m'eſpie.

FINIS.

5 AP 58